(c) whether the ICAR has taken any further action to protect wheat from such disease in future; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) formed a special team to survey and monitor the summer crop of wheat (off season crop) in the first week of August 2008. The team travelled extensively during August 2008 to monitor the presence of different diseases of wheat crop covering the route from Shimla to summer nursery at Dalang Maidan in Lahul and Spiti valley of Himachal Pradesh through Tabo, Kaza and Kunzum Pass. No trace of stem rust race Ug 99 was found in the wheat crop during this survey.

(c) and (d) So far, Ug 99 race of stem rust of wheat has been not reported in India. The ICAR has taken proactive steps and arranged screening of newly released Indian wheat varieties as well varieties in pipe line against Ug 99 race of stem rust under epiphytotic conditions of disease in Kenya during last two crop seasons and identified resistant varieties. Few of them are: HD2781, DL788-2, HI-977, HS295 and HUW-234. Breeding lines having resistance to Ug 99 are also in pipeline.

Improvement of crops production

2016. DR. V. MAITREYAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total expected production of paddy, wheat and sugar in the country during the current year;

(b) what is the total demand of these products in the country during the current year;

(c) what steps are being taken to improve the situation of the stocks of these products;

(d) whether Government has undertaken any new methods to increase the yield of these products per hectare across the country; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) During the current year i.e., 2008-09, the production of paddy (kharif season) and sugar are estimated at 124.88 million tonnes and 20.50 million tonnes respectively. As the sowing of wheat which is a Rabi crop is in progress, its production for 2008-09 has not been estimated so far.

As per estimates of Working Group of Planning Commission for the 11th Five Year Plan (based on the behaviourstic approach), the demand of paddy and wheat for the year 2008-09 have been estimated at 139.31 million tonnes and 72.72 million tonnes respectively. The demand for sugar during the current year is estimated at 22.00 million tonnes.

(c) The opening stock of sugar as on 1st October 2008 are provisionally at 10.50 lakh tonnes and appropriate steps are taken to improve the stock position of sugar as and when the situation

warrants. As regards paddy and wheat, the Government has taken following broad steps to improve the situation of their stocks and availability:

- The Minimum Support Price (MSP) of wheat was fixed at Rs. 10007/- per quintal for RMS 2008-09 to encourage farmers to grow more wheat and to maximize the procurement.
- Wheat exports on private account have been banned till further orders. Wheat exports from Central Pool have also been banned.
- A notification titled "Wheat (Stock Declaration by Companies or Firms or Individuals) order 2008 was issued under the Essential Commodities Act 1955 on 11.02.2008. The order provides that any Company or Firm or individual which purchases wheat beyond 10000 tonnes during 2008-09 shall furnish return to Secretary, Food of the State from where maximum quantity has been purchased. While a return for purchase of wheat beyond 25000 tonnes is required to be furnished to the Central Government.
- Department of Consumer Affairs has extended notification under the EC Act upto 30.04.2009 enabling State Governments to impose stock limit on wheat.
- Import of wheat on private account at zero duty has been permitted till further orders.
- The Government has Fixed a MSP of Rs. 850 per quintal and Rs. 880 per quintal for 'Common' and Grade 'A' varieties of paddy respectively for KMS 2008-09, giving an increase of Rs. 105 per quintal over the procurement price (MSP+Bonus) of paddy of previous year. In order to maximize rice procurement in the on going KMS, the Government has announced a bonus of Rs. 50 per quintal over and above the MSP on both varieties of paddy. This year the estimated procurement is 282 lakh tonnes.
- Export of non-basmati rice has been banned *w.e.f.* 01.04.2008. Export of Basmati Rice at Minimum Export Price of US$ 1200 per MT has been restricted through the ports of Kandla, Kakinada, Kolkata and JNPT, Mumbai. Government of India has imposed export duty of Rs. 8000 per tonne on basmati rice *w.e.f.* 10.05.2008.
- Import of rice at zero duty has been permitted.
- A notification titled "Rice (Stock Declaration by Companies or Firms or Individuals) Order 2007 has been issued under the Essential Commodities Act 1955 on 29.09.2008. The order provides that any Company or Firm or Individual which purchases paddy (in terms of rice) or rice beyond 10000 tonnes during Kharif Marketing Season 2008-09 (October-September) shall furnish a return to the Secretary, Department of Food of the State from where maximum quantity has been purchased. In case the purchase of paddy (in terms of rice) or rice exceeds 25000 tonnes (throughout the country) the return in the prescribed proforma to Department of Food & Public Distribution of Central Government.

(d) and (e) To increase the production and productivity of cereals in the country, the Integrated Cereals Development Programme (ICDP) in rice, wheat and coarse cereals based cropping systems have been under implementation since October 2000.

In order to further increase the production and productivity of cereals, the Government has launched National Food Security Mission (NFSM) from Rabi 2007-08. The NFSM aims at increasing the production of rice by 10 million tonnes and wheat by 8 million tonnes in the targeted districts of the country, by the end of the 11th Plan *i.e.* 2011-2012.

To increase the production and productivity of sugarcane in the country, Government is also implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Sustainable Development of Sugarcane Based Cropping System (SUBACS) in different States subsumed under Macro Management Mode of Agriculture since April 2004. Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has also developed more than 700 high yielding varieties and 28 hybrids suitable for different agro-climatic conditions. Frontline demonstrations are also organised by ICAR on farmers' fields on 100% Central Government assistance for transfer of technology. Also research efforts are on by the ICAR in the various areas for increasing production and productivity of crops.

Steps to provide quality seeds for high production

†2017. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is formulating any scheme to provide quality seeds to farmers in order to increase the production in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government is considering to take assistance from private sector also to implement this scheme;

(d) whether private sector companies have expressed their interest in this scheme; and

(e) if so, the details of such companies alongwith the details of the steps being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) The Government is implementing several schemes to provide quality seeds to farmers. The details of the Schemes are given in the statement-I (*See* below).

(c) to (e) The National Seed Policy, 2002 envisages a greater role for the private sector in seed production in the country. Private sector contributed 41.09% of the seed produced in 2007-08 *i.e.* 76.50 lakh quintals. The Government of India also implements a Scheme to boost seed production in the private sector. Assistance is provided through credit linked back-ended capital subsidy at the rate of 25% of the project cost subject to a maximum limit of Rs.10 lakh per unit on seed infrastructure development. The assistance has been enhanced to a maximum limit of Rs.25 lakh per unit on seed infrastructure development in the Eleventh plan (2007-08 onwards). The details of the assistance availed of by different States under the scheme is given in the Statement-II.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.